

Message Text

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10

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /065 W

----- 020354

P 241005Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7857

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, MA

SUBJ: NEARLY COMPLETE REFERENDUM TALLY

REF: TANANARIVE 2093 (NOTAL)

1. OVER 3.3 MILLION MALAGASY WENT TO THE POLLS DEC. 21 TO APPROVE, BY MEANS OF ONE SIMPLE YES-NO VOTE, (A) NEW CONSTITUTION OF NEW DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR, (B) CHARTER OF SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, AND (C) DIDIER RATSIRAKA AS PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC. AS OF 11:50 P.M. DEC. 23RD, WITH 9,579 OUT OF 10,020 POLLING PLACES REPORTING, RESULTS SHOW 94.66 PERCENT OF THE VOTERS VOTING YES, 5.34 PERCENT VOTING NO. ABOUT ONE PERCENT OF ALL BALLOTS WERE EITHER BLANK OR INVALIDATED.

2. FOR THE PROVINCIAL BREAKDOWN OF THE VOTE, FIVE OUT OF THE SIX PROVINCES RECORDED BETWEEN 93.81 PERCENT AND 99.01 PERCENT YES VOTE. EXCEPTION WAS PROVINCE OF DIEGO-SUAREZ WHERE 75.21 PERCENT VOTED YES, 24.79 PERCENT VOTED NO.

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DIEGO-SUAREZ ALSO HAD HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF REGISTERED VOTERS

WHO DID NOT VOTE AS WELL AS HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF BLANK AND INVALIDATED BALLOTS; AS RESULT, PERCENTAGE OF YES VOTES IN DIEGO-SUAREZ OUT OF TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS THEREBY DROPS TO ABOUT 60 PERCENT.

3. FOR CITY OF TANANARIVE AND SUBSURB OF AMBOHIMANARINA, 84.86 PERCENT VOTED YES AND 13.16 PERCENT VOTED NO.

4. OVERALL, REFERENDUM SHOWED CLEARLY HOW INEFFECTUAL AND DISORGANIZED IS OPPOSITION TO RATSIRAKA. INTELLIGENTSIA WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN DO NOT SEE REFERENDUM RESULTS AS REAL SUPPORT FOR RATSIRAKA, WHEREAS LOWER CLASSES APPEAR TO BE SATISFIED THAT THEY VOTED THE WAY THEY WERE EXPECTED TO. A NUMBER OF MALAGASY HAVE POINTED OUT THAT 1972 ELECTION GAVE THEN-PRESIDENT TSIRANANA SIMILIAR OVERWHELMING MAJORITY VOTE BUT HE WAS NONETHELESS FORCED OUT OF OFFICE THREE MONTHS LATER, GENERALLY AS RESULT OF POPULAR WILL.

5. WE HAVE HEARD, AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, SOME RUMORS CLAIMING ELECTORAL FRAUD BUT WE TEND TO DISCOUNT THEM. FOR EXAMPLE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT (A) UNINFORMED MASSES IN THE RURAL AREAS, WHERE THERE ARE NO NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO RECEPTION IS POOR, WOULD HAVE DONE OTHERWISE THAN MASSIVELY SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT, AND (B) GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE ALLOWED SUCH SIGNIFICANT DISPARITY TO SHOW UP IN RESULTS FOR CITY OF TANANARIVE AND PROVINCE OF DIEGO-SUAREZ. CIVIL SERVANTS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL DID, HOWEVER, PROVIDE EXTENSIVE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AND MANPOWER TO FURTHER "YES" VOTE DURING CAMPAIGN.

6. AS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RATSIRAKA'S PROGRAM, SOME HIGH-RANKING MILITARY OFFICERS WITH WHOM EMBASSY HAS HAD CONTACT IN LAST FEW DAYS FEEL THAT RATSIRAKA IS NOW OBLIGED TO IMPLEMENT AS LEAST CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF HIS PROGRAM IN ORDER TO EFFECTIVELY FOLLOW-UP ON HIS ELECTORAL TRIUMPH.

7. FURTHER ANALYSIS OF REFERENDUM RESULTS WILL FOLLOW.SHEINBAUM

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